



Global Change and
Terrestrial Ecosystems



First Announcement
Open Science Conference on
**Global Change and
the Terrestrial Human-Environment System
(Land Core Project)**

1-4 December 2003
Morelia, MEXICO

Conveners: The Global Change and Terrestrial Ecosystems (GCTE) of the International Biosphere-Geosphere Program (IGBP), and the Land Use-Cover Change (LUCC) core projects of the International Human Dimensions Program (IHDP) and IGBP will convene an Open Science Conference between 1-4 of December 2003 in Morelia, Mexico.

Background: Previous work carried out by the LUCC and GCTE projects has focussed on the pathways of change and on the major impacts of environmental and societal changes on land use and terrestrial ecological systems respectively. After about a decade of research, the two projects are coming together to develop an integrated research agenda under the new LAND core project. The goal is to build on the knowledge generated by these projects to elucidate the ecological and social responses to changes and feedbacks in the terrestrial biosphere. Research on specific drivers and processes will continue to consolidate and broaden our understanding of the dynamics of land use and ecosystems dynamics. In addition, new research will focus on key feedback mechanisms that operate within the Earth System by:

- 1) Elucidating how impacts of human and environmental changes on ecosystem structure and functioning translate into changes in the delivery of ecosystem services, and how they in turn influence human decisions on land and environmental management.
- 2) Understanding how impacts of human and environmental changes on ecosystem structure and functioning result in changes in the functioning of the Earth System.

Goals: The Conference has three goals:

- (i) To present the state-of-the art science on a number of research areas dealing with global change and the terrestrial biosphere with an emphasis on integrative projects addressing the coupled biophysical-human system (e.g., interactions between climate, land use and disturbances, climate/atmosphere and land use impacts on coupled biogeochemical cycles, urban development impacts and feedbacks, production/biogeochemical trade-offs in agroecosystems, regional integrative studies).
- (ii) To provide input into the development of the research agenda that will steer the new LAND project resulting from the union of GCTE and LUCC. The new project will be launched in early 2004 after feedback from the Conference has been taken into consideration.
- (iii) To stimulate the scientific community to develop more integrative research on issues related to biogeochemical cycles, disturbances, and biodiversity under global change, with attention to consequences for the delivery of ecosystem services and vulnerabilities of the human-environment system.

Who should attend?: All scientists with an interest in understanding components or the totality of the terrestrial biosphere as a coupled biophysical-human system.

Further information and Contact: Information on the Conference will be posted at the websites of GCTE (<http://www.gcte.org>) and LUCC (<http://www.geo.ucl.ac.be/LUCC/lucc.html>). A second and third announcement with detailed information on the registration procedures, agenda, and venue will follow.